



Legislative Review, Issue #2 – for the Week Ending March 21, 2025

Federal

Budget News (Economic Policy Institute, March 15 [Congress passes Continuing Resolution \(H.R. 1968\) to fund federal government, cut domestic federal spending | Economic Policy Institute](#);

Georgia Center for Non-profits, March 15 [Details of the continuing resolution passed March 14, 2025 | GCN](#))

- A continuing resolution was passed by the Senate on March 14 after being passed by the House earlier in the week. The bill funds the government through Sept. 30, 2025 and includes an overall reduction to non-defense spending of \$13B. Other changes include:
 - Funding for the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies from \$26.2B in FY 2024 to \$26.6B. This includes an increase of more than \$500B for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), bringing its funding to \$7.6B.
 - Funding for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education from \$194.4B in FY 2024 to \$198.2B.
 - The measure also extends numerous expiring Medicare and Medicaid provisions through Sept. 30.
 - Other extensions through Sept. 30 include the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program
- With the passing of the continuing resolution, work can continue with budget reconciliation between the House and Senate. Of note:
 - Proposed cuts to SNAP (Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, January 13 [Republican SNAP Proposals Could Take Food Away From Millions of Low-Income Individuals and Families | Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#))
 - Proposed cuts to Medicaid, which could put additional strain on food banks, pantries, and community kitchens as families may be challenged between healthcare costs and putting food on the table. (Newsweek, March 18 [Will Trump Cut Medicaid? What the Signs Are Pointing To](#); Grants Makers in Health, February 2025 [Overview of Potential Medicaid Changes in 2025 Budget Reconciliation Bill - Grantmakers In Health](#))
- Budget reconciliation efforts may be impacted by three House races that will be decided on April 1. Two seats are open in Florida, while a third seat is open in New York. In addition, confirmation for New York House member Elisa Stefanik (R) should start in April, which will vacate an additional seat in the House. (Politico, March 19 [Johnson's impeachment headache - POLITICO](#))

Agriculture News (Politico Weekly Ag, March 17 [USDA preps for farm aid rollout - POLITICO](#))

- The Agriculture Department is expected to open applications for economic aid to farmers by the deadline of Friday, March 21. “USDA chief Brooke Rollins promised farmers at the Commodity Classic at the beginning of March that the funds would be ready by that deadline.”
- Last week, New Jersey learned the USDA was cancelling the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS) and Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA). Nationwide, a loss of over \$1B, \$26M of which would be heading to New Jersey. (Politico, March 10 [USDA cancels \\$1B in local food purchasing for schools, food banks - POLITICO](#)) Of the \$26M, approximately \$9.9M was slated for LFPA with the remainder, approximately \$17M going to support the purchase of food from local New Jersey farmers in support of the school meal programs.
 - [Gov. Murphy and Speaker Coughlin condemned the USDA for the cancellation](#)
 - *NJ Spotlight News* ran a story about the local impact due to the loss of both programs. Story is available at [Ending of two food programs will hit NJ residents, farmers.](#)
 - Quick notes to know about the loss of these two funding programs per the joint [statement from Governor Murphy and Speaker Coughlin:](#)
 - NJ was set to receive \$9.9M in Local Food Purchasing Assistance and \$16.2M in Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement funding
 - There are 46 producers across New Jersey participating in these programs, 32 of which are underserved producers
 - For more info on LFS: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/lfs>
 - For more on LFPA: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/lfpacap>

Food and Nutrition News

- With the introduction of potential changes to the Thrifty Food Plan, which is the basis for SNAP, the Urban Institute with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has created a tool to better understand the impact of these proposed cuts to all fifty states. Access the tool at [How Would SNAP Benefit Cuts Affect Your Community? | Urban Institute](#)
- Restrictions on food purchases are also under consideration as part of the next Farm Bill with a focus on removing soda and unhealthy foods. (Civil Eats, March 10 [Bans on Soda and Candy in SNAP Are Back on the Table | Civil Eats](#))

Tariff News

The stock market continues to feel the impact of the latest round of tariffs (Associated Press, March 18 [Stock market today: Back down goes Wall Street as Big Tech resumes its slide](#))

- April 2 – US to impose reciprocal to address all Canadian and Mexican tariffs, taxes and non-tariff barriers on the U.S.; Canada to impose retaliatory tariffs on an additional \$95B-worth of U.S. goods
- March 13 – Canada imposed retaliatory tariff on \$29.8 billion worth of US products
- March 12 – US imposed a 25% tariff on Canadian steel and aluminum
- March 4 – Canada imposes retaliatory tariffs on US including orange juice, peanut butter, wine & spirits, beer and coffee (Financial Post, March 14 [Tariff tracker: the latest updates in the U.S., Canada trade war | Financial Post](#))

State

When the Governor signs something into law, we will note it in this section.

Upcoming Events on the OFSA Team's Schedule

- *Wed., March 26 School Meals/Summer EBT Outreach, Bloomfield Town Hall*
 - *Friday, April 11, Community Outreach Fair, McGuire Base Theater, Joint Base MDL, 2pm-6pm*
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Resources from OFSA

Public Data Catalog: offers searchable datasets relevant to food security for research, grant writing, and more.

Data Chart Book: provides county-level insights on meal costs, housing burdens, and other key data points

You can find these and additional resources on the [OFSA website here](#).

About the New Jersey Office of Food Security Advocate

The NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate (OFSA) is providing this content as an informational resource for those who are following proposed changes and other actions with the potential to impact food and nutrition programs and policies directly, or to indirectly impact everyday food security for individuals and families.

OFSA serves all New Jerseyans. OFSA will not recommend or endorse any advocacy actions, nor will OFSA support or oppose any legislation. Similarly, OFSA does not comment on legislation. It is up to each organization, coalition, neighborhood, community and industry/sector and their partners to determine what, if any, actions or positions to take.

OFSA openly acknowledges the sources presented are not an exhaustive list or a full representation of perspectives on the topic. It is vital to consider this compilation not in a vacuum, but together with your existing practices and preferences for following news and legislative updates.

A copy of this and future compilations will be made available on the OFSA website [here](#). Please allow a few days' time for the OFSA website to be updated.